DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 243 138 CS 208 269

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TITLE A Comparison of Media Use and Attitudes in Two Suburban Cable Areas of a Large Metropolitan Market.
PUB DATE Aug 84
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (67th, Gainesville, FL, August 5-8, 1984).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attitudes; *Cable Television; Comparative Analysis; Consumer Economics; *Demography; *Predictive Validity; Predictor Variables; Social Values; *Television Research; *Television Viewing
IDENTIFIERS *Media Use

ABSTRACT

To determine if variables predicting cable subscription differed in markets of different demographic makeups, a survey was administered to 596 adults in two suburban areas served by the same cable company. Analysis of data on audience demographics, media use, knowledge of and attitudes toward television and cable television, channel popularity, and audience social values indicated that conventional demographic variables such as family income or size were fairly reliable indicators but poor predictors of cable subscription. Results also showed that nonsubscribers had a more positive attitude toward television in general than cable subscribers. The findings suggested that variables not addressed in the study, such as the attractiveness of the cable service itself, might prove to be better predictors of cable subscription. (Numerous tables presenting survey findings are included in the text.) (MM)

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A COMPARISON OF MEDIA USE AND ATTITUDES IN TWO SUBURBAN CABLE AREAS OF A LARGE METROPOLITAN MARKET

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by

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ABSTRACT

A survey of two suburban cable areas in a large midwestern metropolitan market served by the same company, revealed relatively low predictive power of conventional demographic variables cited in previous studies as reliable indicators of cable subscription. Despite the substantial demographic and psychographic differences between the survey areas, cable subscription rate was essentially the same for both. Results suggest the presence of variables not addressed herein as potential predictors of subscription. Non-subscribers were found to have a more positive overall attitude toward television in general than subscribers.

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A COMPARISON OF MEDIA USE AND ATTITUDES IN TWO SUBURBAN CABLE AREAS OF A LARGE METROPOLITAN MARKET

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Presented to the Advertising Division
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Association for Education in Journalism
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Annual National Conference

August 1984

INTRODUCTION

As cable television penetrates the larger metropolitan areas, it quite often is installed in suburban areas first, often with systems that provide service for a number of contiguous suburbs. Individual suburban areas, all with their own geographic, political, demographic and lifestyle characteristics, pose special challenges to a company attempting to market its goods or services in selected portions of a large metropolitan area. Often it is difficult to generalize from statistics of the large urban area when dealing with an individual suburb or groups of suburbs.

Because of this geographic fragmentation of coverage, and because systematic market research is not always undertaken by cable concerns, it remains difficult to describe accurately subscriber and non-subscriber parameters within or across individual markets (Hemsworth, 1982; "Q and A on Cable," 1981; Rosen, 1981; "Research Needed," 1982). Baldwin and McVoy (1983) cite the relative scarcity of audience studies for cable television, and the resulting confusion on the part of advertisers and cable companies alike as to audience demographics and viewership patterns. What to measure and how to measure it in a cable market is a topic of further debate in an industry which Kaatz (1982) says is at the same stage as television was in the 1950s. For existing and potential cable advertisers, the problem becomes even more compounded because of advertising's need for relatively accurate descriptions of target audiences as well as audience numbers for determining advertising rates.

PURPOSE

The current study provided a unique opportunity to compare the characteristics of two major suburban areas---one north and one south---in the Milwaukee metropolitan market. Research to date is scarce in comparative studies within single major cable markets. Each of the study areas contains seven suburbs, with a total northern suburban population of 70,075, and a total south suburban population of 129,834. The cable company serving the two markets reports virtually equal (about 55 percent) cable subscription penetration in both areas. By comparing two somewhat different suburban areas, both provided with almost identical cable services for approximately the same length of time by the same multiple system operator, some of the more traditional and conventional knowledge about the cable subscriber could be explored.

Differences were also explored of both subscribers' and non-subscribers' attitudes toward television and cable. Additionally, some general media use behaviors were examined.

The purpose of comparing the two suburban markets was, then:

--to obtain basic demographic, attitude and media usage data on both market areas;

--to further examine demographics, attitudes and media usage habits of subscriber and non-subscriber subgroups in both areas;

--to determine the predictive value of a range of variables cited in the research literature as bearing on cable subscribership (Walsh, 1981; Kaplan, 1982; Webster, 1983; "Wiring the Untouchables," 1982; Kaplan, 1978).

It was known from census information that the two areas under study were quite different in their demographic makeups, yet cable penetration rates were essentially the same. The study was undertaken, then, with the hypothesis that while some predictive variables, such as income or family size, are often thought to be somewhat universally predictive of cable subscription, different configurations of potentially predictive variables are at work in markets of different demographic makeups. And while such a variable as income, for example, may be a potent predictor in a market area of moderate income, in an area of higher incomes overall, other variables may be more important.

Such information, it was believed, would be important not only to cable marketers but also to cable advertisers desirous of demographic and psychographic profiles of the subscribers in an area.

METHOD

A survey of Milwaukee's north suburban and south suburban markets was initiated as a joint research project by the Colleges of Speech and Journalism at Marquette University.

Data were gathered using a 7-page telephone survey. The study was conducted in November 1983. Information was tabulated across four subgroups: north subscribers, south subscribers, north non-subscribers, and south non-subscribers. A sample of 1183 telephone numbers was selected based on a random sampling of subscribers and non-subscribers in both markets. Total sample base was 1139, the result of deleting ineligible phone numbers. Telephone interviews, which included questions on audience demographics, media use, knowledge and attitudes toward television and cable, channel popularity, and audience social values were conducted by trained and supervised student interviewers. Interviews took place during three weekday evenings and on one Saturday.

Response rate was 52 percent, which yielded 596 interviews used in tabulation. Of the usable interviews, 57.5 percent were subscribers, and 42.5 percent were non-subscribers. North respondents made up 48.5 percent of the total sample, and south respondents 51.5 percent. A refusal rate of 24 percent was encountered, with no single reason for refusing predominating.

Completed interviews were coded and entered into the Marquette University Digital Vax-11 System and tabulated using the SPSSx statistical package. Frequencies and cross-tabulations were used to describe the data, using the chi-square test of significance for cross-tabulated findings. T-tests were used to discern significant differences between groups on continuous variables. A discriminant analysis was performed to rank the importance of individual predictor variables in each of the two markets. A description of that analysis procedure appears in section D below. In all tests, the .05 or better level of significance was accepted.

FINDINGS

A. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

1. Subscriber and Non-Subscriber Groups: Prior Studies.

As a group, cable subscribers have been described as a fairly homogeneous audience (Krugman and Barban, 1982) of "super" consumers (Kaplan, 1982) having households slightly larger than those of nonsubscribers (Baldwin and McVoy. 1983), higher income levels ("Q and A," 1981), more education and larger household sizes than non-subscribers (Baldwin and McVoy, 1983). The cable household is slightly younger in age than the non-subscriber household (Walsh, 1981; Webster, 1983).

The non-subscriber, conversely, is slightly older, has fewer children in the household, and has lower income than subscribers (Baldwin and McVoy, 1983). The non-subscriber is likely satisfied with the television programming available without cable, and probably is confused or misinformed about cable offerings in his area ("Wiring," 1982).

2. Description of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Area.

The 4-county SMSA of metropolitan Milwaukee, Wisconsin, represents the 28th largest metro area in the United States. At its center, and accounting for just over one-half of its total population of 1,396,767, is the City of Milwaukee, the nation's 16th largest city.

Manufacturing is the mainstay of the area's economy, with the Milwaukee SMSA ranking 15th nationally in industrial production. More than 25 percent of area workers are engaged in manufacturing, and local industrial firms produce $8 billion worth of manufactured products annually. In addition to the large skilled labor force in manufacturing, 22 percent of Milwaukee workers are engaged in wholesale and retail trade and 24 percent work in professional or service-related occupations, the occupational areas experiencing the most growth since the 1970's (Economic Fact Book, 1983).

3. Census and Survey Demographics

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the demographic differences between the north and south survey areas. Table 1 data are compiled from census reports and show average household sizes, median ages and educational, income and selected occupational statistics of the survey areas as well as Milwaukee County and the Milwaukee metropolitan SMSA. Table 2 reflects sizes of households, income, age, education, home ownership and vacation statistics for the survey samples. A further breakdown according to subscription or non-subscription to cable is provided in Table 2.

In north-south comparisons, both tables show a complementary substantiation of the differences between the two suburban areas: The north has significantly ($p<.05$) higher income levels, smaller households, an older mean population, higher education levels, and more home ownership. According to survey data, north residents also take significantly more weeks of vacation away from home each year. North resident occupations are also more professional (31% vs. 9%) than the south, according to census figures.

All of these comparisons demonstrate that the north suburbs are more affluent, educated and upscale compared with the more working-class image of the south suburbs.

TABLE 1
Distribution of Demographic Characteristics
According to Census Data
For North and South Suburban Areas

Demographics	North	South	SMSA	Milwaukee County
Average Number of people per Household	2.61	2.83	2.73	2.59
Median Age	36.0	30.5	29.8	30.0
Household Income	$34,228	$24,637	$22,809	$22,387
Education Level				
Some HS or less	14.4%	26.0%	28.3%	31.4%
HS grad	27.4	44.6	38.5	37.4
Some college	20.2	15.5	16.1	15.5
College grad	38.0	13.9	17.1	15.7
TOTALS	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Occupation by selected industries				
Manufacturing	20.0%	19.9%	31.7%	31.2%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	21.0	10.9	20.7	20.2
Professional and Related Services	30.9	9.2	20.5	21.6
Other	28.1	60.0	27.1	27.0
TOTALS	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

TABLE 2
Survey Distribution of Demographic Characteristics
According to North and South and Cable and
Noncable Subscription

Demographics	North Subs	North Non-Subs	Total North	South Subs	South Non-Subs	Total South	Total Subs	Total Non-Subs
Average Number of People per Household	3.53	2.77	3.20	3.59	3.21	3.48	3.60	2.99
Average Number of Household Incomes	1.76	1.35	1.59	1.46	1.89	1.58	1.61	1.54
Household Income	31,868	27,935	29,435	25,053	21,200	23,598	28,062	25.689
Average Age of Respondents(yrs)	40.1	48.9	44.3	38.7	45.2	41.3	39.6	47.0
Education Level								
Some HS or less	11.6%	7.3	9.7%	12.3%	19.7%	15.3%	12.0%	13.5%
HS grad	22.0	21.0	21.5	43.0	33.9	39.1	32.9	27.5
Some College	20.7	24.2	22.5	22.9	23.6	23.1	21.9	23.9
Coll. Grad	29.3	29.0	29.1	15.6	12.6	14.7	22.2	20.7
Grad or Prof Sch	13.4	17.7	15.2	4.5	7.1	5.5	8.7	12.4
DK or NA	3.0	.8	1.7	1.7	3.1	2.3	2.3	2.0
TOTALS	100.0%	99.9%	99.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Home Ownership(%)	86.6	82.3	84.8	78.8	81.9	80.1	84.7	82.1
Average No. of Weeks Vacation	2.44	2.17	2.43	2.30	2.22	2.25	2.37	2.28
	N=164	N=125	N=289	N=179	N=128	N=307	N=343	N=251

Note: The "N" values listed at the bottom represent total number of respondents for each of the categories. For specific variables, some of the Ns are smaller, because of respective missing values.

4. Demographic Correlates of Cable Subscription

From analysis of the survey data, four demographic characteristics -- size of household, household incomes, age of respondent, and respondent's education level -- demonstrated statistically significant differences among the subgroups.

a. Size of Household. Subscribers had significantly larger (p=.000) households, averaging 3.6 people compared to 3.0 people in non-subscriber households. Comparing north and south samples, subscribers averaged 3.53 people in the north and 3.59 people in the south. Non-subscriber households reported 2.77 people in the north sample, and 3.20 for south suburban residents.

b. Household Incomes. In the north suburban area, subscribers had significantly more full-time household incomes (1.76) than non-subscribers (1.35). Likewise, mean incomes of north subscribers were significantly higher (p=.012) than non-subscribers.

In the south suburban market, the non-subscribers had significantly more (1.89) full-time household incomes than subscribers (1.46). The mean income for subscriber homes, however, was significantly higher (p=.008) than the income for non-subscriber homes (approx. $24,000 vs. approx. $21,500). Overall, north suburban incomes were significantly higher than those of the south suburban area. For example, 58.11 percent of north respondents reported incomes in excess of $31,000, while only 32.2 percent of south suburban respondents reported having that income level.

c. Age of Respondent. Non-subscribers, on the average, are significantly older than subscribers (47.0 years vs. 39.6 years). The average age of the north subscriber was 40.6 years, and the north non-subscriber 48.9 years. In the south suburban market, the average subscriber respondent was 38.7 years old, and the non-subscriber 45.2 years old. Ages of the survey sample are higher than those of the census demographics because only adults were interviewed in the survey.

d. Education Level. Respondents in the north suburbs had significantly higher (p=.000) levels of education than did the south suburban sample. As an example, 44.3 percent in the north sample reported having at least graduated from college, compared with 20.2 percent in the south sample. In both markets, however, there were no significant differences in education levels between subscribers and non-subscribers.

e. Other Demographic and Lifestyle Variables. Four additional variables were studied relative to survey subgroups: Home ownership, length of time lived at present address, number of weeks of vacation taken away from home each year, and the weekly frequency of attendance at entertainment events outside the home. Home ownership was statistically equal across all categories, with the exception that subscribers in the north were more likely to own their homes than subscribers in the south (89.9% vs. 80.1%, p=.018). In a similar vein, subscribers in the south area were found to have lived at their present address shorter than non-subscribers in that area.

For frequency of entertainment or vacations, there were no significant differences found across all groups.

B. MEDIA USE

Subscribers and non-subscribers in both survey areas were queried about some general media use habits, including subscription to newspapers and magazines and ownership and use of television.

1. Newspaper and Magazine Subscription.

There were no significant differences found in the number of newspapers subscribed to by any of the subgroups. North respondents, as a whole, subscribed to more magazines than south resondents (p=.005), but there were no differences found between subscribers and non-subscribers in either group.

2. Ownership and Use of Television.

Subscribers in the north area owned more televisions per household than non-subscribers (2.72 vs. 2.27; p=.000). But there was no difference in ownership in the south sample between subs and non-subs. Overall, north respondents owned more televisions than south respondents (2.44 vs. 2.21; p=.006).

Regarding the number of hours respondents reported viewing television per day, north subscribers watched more (3.03 hours) than north non-subscribers (2.30 hours; p=.000). In the south, however, reported viewing was statistically equal between subscribers and non-subscribers, averaging about 3 hours per day.

C. ATTITUDES TOWARD TELEVISION AND CABLE

1. Television Attitudes.

A 1983 Roper survey for television showed that cable viewers are similar to non-subscribers in their attitudes toward television. The majority of both groups were favorable toward advertising as a price to pay for television, and rated news coverage as good to excellent ("All the same," 1983).

Both the Steiner (1963) and Bower (1973) studies demonstrated generally favorable attitudes toward television across seventeen characteristics, each a pair of bipolar adjectives describing television.

Modified for telephone interviewing, these adjectives (using eight positive and nine negative) were incorporated in the present study. Both subscriber and non-subscriber respondents were asked to respond to the phrase "Television is _____" along a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 3 lists the results, comparing the mean scores of north subscribers with south subscribers for each adjective.

T-tests of differences between the means for the two subgroups showed significant differences only on the "Getting Worse" dimension, where north subscribers were more negative about television than south subscribers.

TABLE 3
Attitudes Toward Television
(Subgroup Means)

Television is	North Subscribers	South Subscribers	North Non-Subscribers	South Non-Subscribers	Total Samples
Serious	3.31	3.27	3.24	3.36	3.29
Interesting	2.52	2.45	2.81	2.71	2.58
All the Same	3.54	3.52	3.29	3.41	3.45
Relaxing	2.34	2.46	2.42	2.53	2.42
Unimportant	3.46	3.30	3.44	3.31	3.35
Getting Worse	2.82	2.60	2.44	2.53	2.61
Keeps Changing	2.65	2.67	2.76	2.69	2.68
Too "Simple Minded"	2.85	2.79	2.48	2.84	2.75
Terrible	3.60	3.57	3.24	3.41	3.47
Generally Excellent	3.47	3.46	3.64	3.57	3.54
Not For Me	3.64	3.52	3.29	3.43	3.48
In Bad Taste	3.48	3.35	3.24	3.23	3.31
Exciting	3.00	2.91	3.26	3.21	3.05
On Everyone's Mind	3.15	3.12	3.21	3.16	3.14
Imaginative	2.93	2.81	3.18	3.06	2.96
Not Much Fun	3.40	3.38	3.08	3.13	3.28
Informative	2.17	2.22	2.24	2.27	2.22

1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disgree, 5=Strongly Disagree

Comparing non-subscribers in the same way for the two subgroups, the only characteristic to show a significant difference was that television is too "simple minded," an opinion held more by north non-subscribers than south non-subs.

An additive index for the above 17 adjectival characteristics was computed, after adjusting scores of the negative adjectives to reflect the same direction as the positive adjectives, yielding a singular "attitude" toward television dimension.

Interestingly, non-subscribers were found to be more positive toward television ir general than subscribers (mean=49.7 vs 40.1, p=.001-- the higher score signifies a more positive attitude). But again, no differences were found comparing the north and south sample areas on the attitude descriptor.

The more positive attitude toward television by non-subscribers underscores some of the conventional knowledge about cable non-subscribers ("Wiring," 1982) which says that people who are most satisfied with what they can already obtain through regular television are less likely to subscribe or desire cable.

Though statistical comparison is not possible with the Steiner/Bower measures, the present finding raises the question whether overall attitudes toward television have become more negative, since the present findings do not appear to be overall nearly as positive as the Steiner/Bower findings.

2. Non-subscriber Attitudes.

Non-subscribers were asked if they will subscribe to cable in the future. On the composite attitude index, there were no significant differences between those who will subscribe and

those who said they will not.

A comparison of individual adjectival characteristics showed significantly that those who will not subscribe to cable are more positive about television in the characteristics of "bad taste," "terrible," "not fun," and "unimportant." These differences suggest that cable resisters are satisfied with television as it is, and the survey findings report that the most important reason (30%) why non-subscribers do not subscribe is that they believe they have no need for more television service than they already have. Again, this finding is statistically the same for both the north and south non-subscriber subgroups (TABLE 4).

TABLE 4
Reasons for Not Subscribing to Cable

Reason	North	South
don't need more tv	32.2%	29.9%
no time; busy	19.5	12.6
no interest	14.9	11.5
costs too much	10.3	11.5
other	23.1	34.5
TOTAL	100.0 N=89	100.0 N=92

3. Attractiveness of cable. Non-subscribers were asked to say what they thought were the most attractive elements of cable. On this issue, there was very little variance between north and south suburban samples. The most attractive feature reported was

movies. That response was followed by variety/special programs, wider selection of programs, no or fewer commercials, sports, and other reasons. A sizeable percentage of the sample (20.7 percent north and 16.9 percent south) said they found nothing attractive about cable. Movies were by far the most attractive feature of cable to both non-subscriber groups. Results are summarized in the following table.

TABLE 5
Most Attractive Elements of Cable
To Non-Subscribers

Attractive Elements	North Non-Subscribers	South Non-Subscribers
Movies	18.4%	20.2%
Variety/Specials	14.9	11.2
Wider Selection	11.5	9.0
No or fewer Commercials	11.5	7.9
Sports	5.7	9.0
Nothing at all Attractive	20.7	16.9
Don't Know or No Answer	10.3	16.9
Other	7.0	8.9
TOTAL	100.0 % N=89	100.0 % N=92

Non-subscribers also were asked to identify the least attractive element of cable. Responses centered around the areas of pornographic/adult programming, the high cost, and a feeling that cable was overall not worthwhile. Results are summarized in the following table. The chi-square test shows no significant

differences between the subgroups.

TABLE 6
Least Attractive Elements of Cable
To Non-Subscribers

Least Attractive Elements	North Non-Subscribers	South Non-Subscribers
Pornographic/ Adult Programming	12.0	15.7
Cost	13.3	13.3
Overall Not Worthwhile	9.6	
Bad Shows/Junk	3.6	4.8
Don't Know or No Answer	19.3	30.1
Other	42.2	36.1
TOTAL	100.0% N=89	100.0% N=92

D. DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS OF PREDICTOR VARIABLES

Based on the above findings, a list was compiled of twelve variables which were predictive in either or both of the survey areas on the dependent variable of cable subscription. Those variables were:

Age of Respondent
Household Income
Number of Magazines Subscribed to
Attitude Toward Television
Size of Household
Weeks Vacation per Year
Number of Televisions
Education Level

Length of Time Lived There
Hours of Television Viewing per Day
Ownership of Home
Number of Full Time Household Incomes

Identical discriminant analyses were performed for each of the areas across those variables. The PAO's V stepwise procedure was utilized, and prior probabilities were specified for group membership for each respective area. Table 7 gives a summary of the analysis for north respondents; Table 8 for south resondents. Group membership was defined as subscription to cable television. In the north analysis, 66% of the overall cases were correctly classified, with 74.1% of the subscribers correctly classified. After eliminating all respondents who had missing responses for any of the included variables, a total of 200 cases in the north sample was analyzed.

In the south analysis, 65% of the overall cases were correctly classified, with 85.1% of the subscribers correctly classified. After elimination of respondent cases with missing responses, a total of 253 cases was analyzed from the south area.

The north analysis produced a 0.211 eigenvalue with a canonical correlation of 0 .417. The south analysis produced a 0.069 eigenvalue with a 0.254 canonical correlation. In the north area, a lambda value of 0.83 was computed before the function was performed; in the south sample, a lambda value of 0.95 was computed before the function was performed. Both of these lambda values suggest that a large proportion of the discriminating information is not accounted for by the variables

analyzed. In both cases, significance of the discriminant analysis was better than the p=.05 level (North: p=0.000; south: p=0.017).

TABLE 7
Summary of Discriminant Analysis
of North Suburban Subscribers and Non-Subscribers

VARIABLE ENTERED	WILKS' LAMBDA	RAO'S V	CHANGE IN V	SIG. OF CHANGE
Hours of TV viewing/day	0.943969	11.34	11.34	0.0008
Size of Household	0.895001	22.41	11.07	0.0009
Household Income	0.860825	30.88	8.472	0.0036
Attitude Toward TV	0.851359	33.35	2.467	0.1162
Number of TVs	0.843476	35.39	2.043	0.1529
Respondent Age	0.834810	37.79	2.404	0.1210
How Long Lived There	0.825867	40.27	2.477	0.1155

TABLE 8
Summary of Discriminant Analysis
Of South Suburban Subscribers and Non-Subscribers

VARIABLE ENTERED	WILKS' LAMBDA	RAO'S V	CHANGE IN V	SIG. OF CHANGE
How Long Lived There	0.953142	11.11	11.11	0.0009
Income Level	0.940783	14.23	3.115	0.0776
Attitude Toward TV	0.935519	15.58	1.352	0.2450

From Table 7, only three variables emerged significant as predictors of cable subscription, using the p=0.05 significance cutoff level for change in Rao's V. In descending order, those

are the hours of viewing per day, the size of the household, and the household income level. All three of those are positively correlated with cable subscription. From Table 8, only one of the twelve possible variables was a statistically significant discriminator between cable subscribers and non-subscribers---length of time lived at the present address. That variable is negatively correlated, meaning that the shorter time a respondent family lived at the address, the more likely they were to subscribe to cable.

Perhaps the most useful of the findings from this analysis is the revelation that the twelve potential discriminating variables yielded a very small proportion of variance in the membership of respondents in either the subscriber or non-subscriber groups. A secondary revelation is the relatively low predictive power of most of the variables described in the study. The implications of these findings are described in the next section.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Using the findings from the analyses described in this study, it is possible to build a limited profile of the cable and non-cable household and to suggest possible correlates of market-area identities.

Consistent with census demographics, survey demographics support the differences between the two areas in profiling the northern suburbs as more affluent and more educated, and generally older with smaller households. Examination of their overall use of media follows the expected pattern: northern residents have more televisions but watch tv fewer hours. They also subscribe to more magazines than their south suburban counterparts.

Attitudes toward television in general by all groups suggested more negative evaluations than similar studies done in 1963 and 1973. North subscribers agreed significantly more strongly than south subscribers with the idea that television is "Getting Worse," while north non-subscribers felt that that television was more "simple-minded" than did south non-subscribers. An additive index of attitudes showed non-subscribers to have more favorable attitudes toward television than subscribers.

In other comparisons of subscribers and non-subscribers, subscribers have generally larger and younger households, more and larger household incomes, but essentially the same levels of education, newspaper and magazine use as non-subscribers.

There were a few variables where the north and south populations differed with regard to subscriber/non-subscriber comparisons. North subscribing households, for example, had more fulltime incomes than non-subscribers. But in the south sample, the non-subscribers had more incomes. In both areas, however,

the household income level was higher for subscribers.

Only in the south sample did the length of time lived at the present address correlate with cable subscription. Only in the north sample did the number of televisions owned differ between subscribers and non-subscribers.

The discriminant analysis underscores some of these differences. While income level is the only variable to occur in both analyses as highly predictive, for the north the amount of television viewing and the larger size of the household are most highly predictive, whereas in the south the length of time at the present address predicts the strongest.

It is important to note that in both discriminant analyses, the power of the variables listed in predicting subscription was quite low. This suggests that, though conventional variables as described by the literature and further supported by this study are fairly reliable indicators of cable subscription, their predictive values are small.

There seem to be other factors not researched by the present study which correlate more strongly with cable subscription. This suggestion is supported not only by the weak power of the discriminant analyses, but also by the substantially variant market areas across many of the demographic dimensions explored in this study. Though the differences between the two areas are demonstrably strong, the rate of cable subscription is equal.

Some of those factors may reside more in marketing strategies than in demographic or lifestyle profiles. The diverse nature of cable itself, providing a rather wide variety of programming services, may account for cable's attraction to the wide diversity of subscribers. And while some basic variables, such as size of household, age, and income are apparent predictors, beyond that are seemingly many unapparent predictors which prompt people to subscribe. The inability of the discriminant analysis to produce either a strong predictive power or a long array of predictive variables lends support to that suggestion.

More qualitative analysis is advocated, to get a broader profile of cable's subscribing audiences. Further examination of the most attractive and least attractive elements of cable could provide a starting point for such analysis of more qualitative analysis dimensions, as well as suggesting appropriate strategies for the advertising and promotional messages a cable company could employ to boost subscription. Other suggestions for further study include research on program selection and viewing habits of subscribers--can viewers be meaningfully segmented based on which channels or programs they watch regularly? This information on viewing segments could be of immediate practical use to the advertiser who wishes to appeal to a fairly narrow audience group.

What prompts people to subscribe to cable television is, it appears, more complex than suspected. Some, no doubt, subscribe simply because of its availability; others because of peer influence. Most, however, may indeed subscribe because of certain offerings that cable has that coincide with the interests and demographic and psychographic makeup of the subscribers. The present study suggests a de-emphasis on the conventional demographic descriptors and a stronger look at some of the more qualitative predictors.

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